

The Public's Voice

Thanks for Support

To The Editor:

Your editorial on the city recreation program which appeared in the Aug. 16 edition of the Press was read with pride by the department staff. Everyone here is grateful for your generous praise and we pledge ourselves to try even harder in the future to be worthy of your support.

Personally, I realize how lucky I am to have such an outstanding recreation staff to run the program on one hand and generous taxpayers so willing to support it financially on the other. No recreation man in the country is more fortunate than I am to be working in such a wonderful city under such ideal conditions.

Thank you for your support and I, too, pledge to work hard to be worthy of it. Harry B. Van Bellehem
Director of Recreation
City of Torrance

It Can Happen Here, Reader Says

To The Editor:

After events at Torrance High School Saturday night, Aug. 17, it can be truthfully said that we are vying with Birmingham, Ala. and Cambridge, Md., for bringing disgrace and shame upon our great country.

Secretary of State Dean Rusk, in a recent address called for a solution to racial problems which he said are causing "deep injury" to U.S. foreign policy abroad. He also stated that he believed the Free World is in a position to move forward with confidence.

He then added: "But in this country we are running this race with one of our legs in a cast."

Chapel Readings Set for Weekend

Readings for "Thieves' Carnival" by Jean Anouilh will be held tomorrow, Friday, and Sunday at 7:30 p.m. at Chapel Theatre 4164 Pac. Cst. Hwy., Torrance. Roles include six men, three women, two young girls, two older girls, and one clarinet or flute player.

Directed by Ed Long, the comedy will open Oct. 18 for a five-weekend run.

Infamous Torrance, that can arrest 245 freedom marchers, but stand by impatiently and not raise one little finger while well-known American Nazis, John Birchers and other right wing extremist attempt to break up a meeting in our central high school where first line California State officials and other civic leaders were trying to enlighten our citizenry on how best to solve our critical racial problem.

Why did the police not act at the proper time?

Yes — the power structure of Torrance is now busy itself with helping to put a cast on one of Uncle Sam's legs. Shame and more shame!

Restrictive Ordinance

It was just six weeks ago that I pleaded with the city council to take a new approach to our racial crisis — to take the American way and go along with our state and national leaders.

The answer was a new restrictive ordinance that would throw me in jail as a common vagrant if I walked streets in my immediate neighborhood at certain times or would cause my car to be towed away and a fine assessed if I dared to make a business or social call on certain Torrance streets at certain times.

At last, as reported in the PRESS of August 21, one councilman, Nick Draie, asks that an ordinance be drafted calling for "What the president wants nationally and what Governor Brown wants for the State."

I say "three cheers for Nick Draie!" Who'll get on the bandwagon next and join Nick in support of our governmental leaders and the true spirit of our Constitution?

I very much wanted to hear Mr. Gerald Herrington, chief deputy real estate commissioner on the night of Aug. 17. He left along with attorney Charles Catterlin, the moderator of the forum, when it was generally believed that the meeting was definitely adjourned.

It Can Happen Here!

Many present urged the speakers to remain, as it would show extreme weakness on the part of the believers in our democratic way of life to allow this inci-

dent gang of American fascists to break up a "town hall" meeting of this magnitude.

The right of free assembly to discuss local problems is traditional in this country. When we collapse through fear or through lack of adequate police protection to carry on an open forum discussion, the skids are under us, and we're headed for an open, bloody military dictatorship. It can happen here! All it takes is for good people to do nothing. The forces of reaction are already raising their ugly heads!

Let us examine quickly what happened to other high officials of the Great State of California on that fateful night.

Mr. Lawrence Lucks, area supervisor, Southern California Division of Fair Employment Practices, was able to speak less than five minutes before the booing, heckling, and cat-calls became just too much for him. He later told me, in a private interview, that this display on the part of the hecklers was one of the worst he had ever seen.

Soloist Points

A fine Torrance welcome, indeed, to one of our outstanding state executives.

Deputy attorney General Robert Burke of the attorney general's office, was able to stand the abuse a little longer and brought out a few salient points on how the social composition of suburban areas is sometimes controlled by a few private individuals.

At the city council meeting six weeks ago we were informed that the city government, as such, wanted no part of an inter-racial council which was proposed at that time.

We are informed that Los Angeles County had a human relations council that would come to any part of the county and deal in racial problems. So they, too, had their speaker, Mr. Julius Klein, ready to participate.

But did the city of Torrance welcome his aid?

Not in the slightest, as he, too, had to leave in disgust.

Negro Shouted Down

Mr. Kenneth Thomas, a Negro, tried nobly to represent the UCRC position, but was shouted down by the discourteous, anti-democratic forces. Mr. Anthony Rios

of the C.S.O., a Mexican-American organization, with his fighting heart, endured the abuse a little longer, but still could not do justice to his important message of bringing peace to this strife-torn city.

What's to be one?

With the present political climate in Torrance, it seems that the good people of our fair city will have to meet outside the city limits of Torrance in order to settle the crisis within our borders.

Perhaps they could meet in the nearby county areas where the county sheriff's officers would see that high state officials are treated with respect.

Or perhaps our neighboring city of Gardena might host a meeting and have Torrance residents listen to state and civic leaders tell of the best methods to bring about racial peace.

Gardena Did It

I attended such a meeting in Gardena on July 17 when the chairman of the County Commission on Human Relations, Mr. Chuman, was principal speaker. Los Angeles Councilman Thomas Bradley also spoke, and, of course, the genial mayor of Gardena, Pete Jensen, was there and spoke.

The Japanese minority group had nothing but the highest praise for their mayor for the wonderful work he was doing and had done in the period immediately after World War II when racial tensions were high on the return of Japanese to their home city of Gardena.

Or perhaps we should try once more to hold a legal assembly again in Torrance and have these same high state officials return for a second try.

Maybe we can get just one city councilman, possibly Nick Draie, to sit on the platform and urge a peaceful meeting. My sincere hope is that the so-called leaders of our city will take a stand directly in reverse of their present attitude and bring peace to our disturbed city and thus aid our country in this desperate fight of the Free World against totalitarianism.

Forest G. Beyrer
4009 Sepulveda Blvd.

Forum Becomes Vehicle for Fascists

To The Editor:

I am writing this letter in regard to an open forum on integration problems in Tor-

rance held at Torrance High School on Saturday Aug. 17, 1963.

The forum included speakers from NAACP, FEPC, a Mexican - American Civil Rights group, and the Attorney General's office. The speeches were to be followed by a period of questions submitted in writing to the panel.

Instead this forum turned into neo-fascist demonstration of Pro-Birchers and Radical Rightists. They showed their contempt for the process of free speech and assembly by jeering, hooting, clapping, and shouting whenever a speaker attempted to talk.

Thus they prevented the audience (about ten times their number) from hearing the discussion. Their tactics paralleled those of the Nazis and Communists, using the mob, catering to emotions and hate.

This demonstration in Torrance, the "All American City" was a most frightening experience. Aren't we in the United States where freedom to discuss issues is one of the basic foundations of our society?

These so-called "Pro-Americans" are the epitome of Un-Americanism, although they use the guise of being Anti-Communists.

And where is the protection that citizens are entitled to, to assemble and talk freely?

Members of the Torrance Police Department were present at the meeting and they did NOTHING. While the Radicals hooted and jeered the speakers, they just watched. Couldn't they have removed the undesirables and thereby set an example for the rest? For some reason they didn't.

As a teacher in Torrance

and Los Angeles I felt another disturbing element to these demonstrations. The behavior reminded me of schools where toughs and young hoodlums made teaching a difficult if not impossible task.

How can we expect children to participate in schools where free speech and the exchange of ideas, common courtesy, and discipline are essential, when so-called responsible adults and parents behave in such a disgraceful manner.

At the meeting I confronted a young couple who were shouting and clapping, and asked them, "Would you like your children to see you now?" The man stammered something about his children not being there, and that he was trying to protect them from communism.

How can people be so deluded from fear and hate that they destroy what they claim to cherish and end up as bad or worse than those they fear.

I hope this event in Torrance will wake up many complacent people and alert them to the dangers right in their own community, of bigotry, ignorance, intolerance, and misguided causes.

Sincerely yours,
Mrs. Donald Salk

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FOR TICKETS & MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

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Pepperdine Degree Goes To Torrancite

Forty-six students at Pepperdine College will receive degrees Friday at the 1963 August commencement program, Dean J. P. Sanders announced recently, as the summer session draws to a close.

Awards will be given to the graduates after they have completed their units during summer school. Students will receive bachelor of arts, bachelor of science and master of arts degrees.

Special honors will be given to Finn Bille and Robert T. Waldron, chosen to Who's Who Among Colleges and Universities, and Harold A. Syfrit, who is recognized by Wall Street Journal for outstanding achievement in general business.

A Torrance graduate receiving a B. A. degree is Mae Marks Woodruff of 4133 Hickman Dr.

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